

A FACT SHEET FOR

Considerations in Establishing a Municipal Oil and Grease Program



Grease Goblin

Scope of Oil and Grease Problems

Oil and grease, primarily generated from restaurants and other institutional food service establishments, are major contributors to sewer line blockages and overflows. Of approximately 5,000 sanitary sewer overflows reported in North Carolina in 1998, the Division of Water Quality conservatively estimates that about 20% were directly attributable to oil and grease. These blockages resulted in at least nine million gallons of untreated wastewater reaching North Carolina's rivers. In response to these sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs), the Division of Water Quality implemented a new enforcement policy and spill reporting requirements during 1998 and 1999. This policy promotes the reduction and elimination of overflows through increased enforcement actions while at the same time giving consideration to those municipalities with oil and grease programs in place. In addition to the regulatory requirements, sewer system maintenance adds significant expenses to local government public utility costs and ulti-

mately tax rates. Municipalities report maintenance and repair costs in excess of \$1 million associated with oil and grease blockages. In response to both the new enforcement policy and increasing maintenance costs, many municipalities have implemented local oil and grease programs to address discharges from institutional food service establishments.

This document provides guidance for those municipalities considering implementing or updating a local oil and grease program. Material was gathered by surveying seven municipalities with established and new programs through phone calls and presentations at the 1999 North Carolina American Water Works Association / Water Environment Association Pretreatment Workshop. All the responses compiled in the Summary Table represent the hard work of the surveyed municipalities. This document is not intended to be a critique of the local programs, but only to provide a review of the varying and innovative approaches taken by the surveyed group.

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